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TITLE

First molecular characterization of *Hydatigera krepkogorski* (Schulz & Landa, 1934) from *Rhombomys opimus* in Iran

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Background: A polycephalic larva of Taeniid species, isolated from abdominal cavity of a great gerbil *Rhombomys opimus*, from Golestan Province, northern Iran, was subjected to molecular analysis.
Methods: Genomic DNA from the larva was obtained using a DNA extraction tissue kit and polymerase chain reaction (PCR) was performed for amplification of the partial 12s rRNA, cytochrome c oxidase subunit 1 and NADH dehydrogenase 1 mitochondrial genes.
Results: BLAST analysis of DNA sequencing indicated 99% homology in 12s rRNA and cox1 genes; and 98% homology in nad1 genes with *Hydatigera krepkogorski* (accession number: AB731762). The sequences of current isolate were deposited in GenBank by accession Nos. MF281971, MF281972 and MF281973 for 12s rRNA, cox1 and nad1 genes, respectively.
Conclusion: This study is the first report of molecular characterization of *H. krepkogorski* from Iran. Isolation and characterization of the adult stage from definitive host will help to clarify incomplete life cycle and morphology data of this species.

Keywords: *Hydatigera krepkogorski*, polycephalic larva, *Rhombomys opimus*, mitochondrial genes, Iran